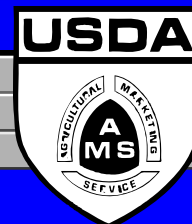


Natural Raising Claims -

*“Voluntary Standards to Address
Production Activities”*



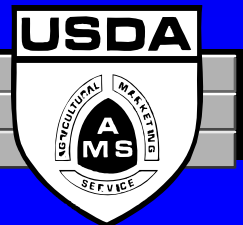
Martin E. O'Connor, Chief
USDA/AMS/LSP/SAT
December 11, 2006



Marketing & Regulatory Programs

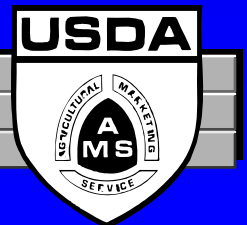
Agenda

- AMS and FSIS Roles in USDA
- Regulatory Background
 - Natural
- Marketplace & Consumer Trends
 - What do current natural claims cover?
- Alternative Livestock Production
 - Current Regulation and Negative Raising Claims
 - Production Practices
 - Current FSIS Claim Verification Protocols
 - Key Issues to be Considered
- Selected Examples



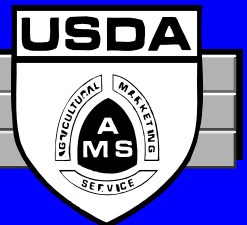
Agricultural Marketing Service

- Authority
 - Agricultural Marketing Act
- Provide Voluntary Services
 - Assist in the Marketing of Meat and Meat Products



Food Safety Inspection Service

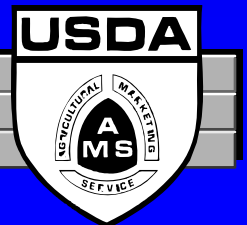
- Authority
 - Federal Meat Inspection Act
 - Poultry Products Act
 - Egg Products Inspection Act
- Public Health Regulatory Authority
 - Meat, Poultry, and Egg Products
 - » Safe, wholesome, and accurately labeled



*Natural – Regulatory Background**

- FSIS permits natural claims on meat & poultry products
 -
 - *Voluntary labeling*
 - *In addition to required label features*
 - Provided that:
 - » The product does not contain artificial flavors, colorings, chemical preservatives or other synthetic ingredients.
 - » The product and its ingredients are minimally processed.

[*Food Standards & Labeling Policy Book – August 2005 & 9 CFR 301](#)



Examples of Natural Claims on Meat & Poultry Products

Simply Perfect™ Chicken

100% All Natural Fresh

Chicken is chicken the way you want it.

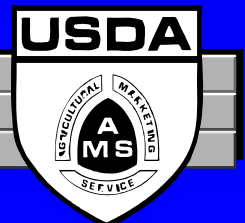
Minimally processed. No added hormones or steroids.* No artificial ingredients. It's chicken you can always count on for superior quality and excellent results. In short, it's *Simply Perfect™* chicken.

*Federal regulation prohibits the use of added hormones or steroids in chicken.

Swift® Natural Fresh Pork

Swift® Natural Fresh Pork is all-natural and wholesome, qualities that research shows consumers will pay more for.

- Producers adhere to strict feeding and handling guidelines
- Hogs selected for tenderness, juiciness, texture and flavor
- 100% all-natural pork, unsurpassed for safety and quality
- Minimally processed – no artificial ingredients added
- American Heart Association certified products



Marketplace & Consumer Needs

- Consumers would like to have the scope of natural claims cover more than the processing and ingredients of meat & poultry items...

- Not Just



but



too!

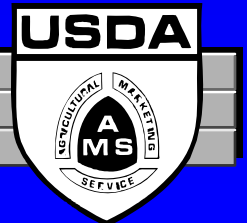


Naturally Raised Production Practices



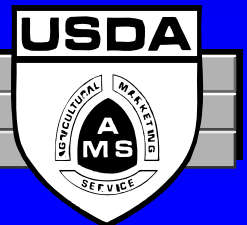
- Environment
- Ration
- Health

Ionophores, Free Range, Grass Fed,
Hormones, Antibiotics, Pesticides, No By-
products, Welfare Practices



Naturally Raised Production Practices Issues

- No Uniform Standard
 - Minimum Threshold for Compliance
 - FSIS - Case by Case Review
 - ↓ Antibiotics
 - ↓ Growth Promotants
- } “During Finishing”; “Last 100 Days on Feed” or “Never Ever”



Alternative Livestock Production Practices

(Voluntary Claims and Statements)

- These alternative livestock production practices have prompted the use of “negative” labeling claims to support them...
 - Poultry
 - » No Added Hormones

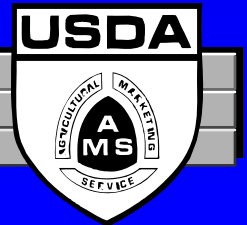


Required Disclaimer

- “Federal regulations prohibit the use of hormones in poultry”



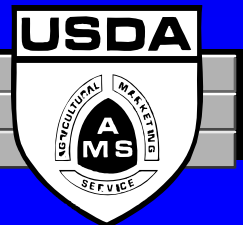
Note: Negative labeling claims associated with livestock production is completely independent of FSIS' current policy on the use of natural claims in meat and poultry products (e.g. minimally processed & no artificial flavors).



Current Voluntary Claims and Statement Policy

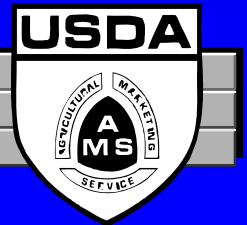
FSIS

- Reviewed on a Case-By-Case Basis
 - Various Program Scopes
 - » All Provide Sufficient Evidence for Labeling
 - Confusion Among Generally Similar Programs with Different Elements
- Verification
 - Producer Testimonials
 - Production Protocols
 - Affidavits
 - » Example: If a claim on a beef cut conveys that no antibiotics were used during raising, the product protocol would cover the entire life of the animal from which the product is from.

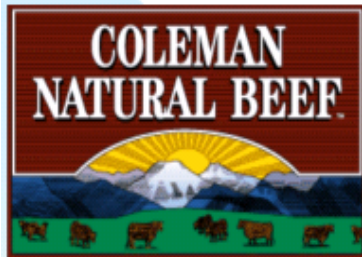


Key Issues to be Considered

- Since voluntary claims and statements are variable
 - What is an appropriate standard for applying/extending natural claims to livestock production?
- Should “*naturally raised*” be definitively classified for clarity in the marketplace and to ensure consumer’s interests are better protected?
 - AMS Voluntary Marketing Claim Standard
 - » Verified through a Process Verified Procedure
 - Quality Managed System
 - ISO Based



Examples of Current Natural Raising Claims



USDA

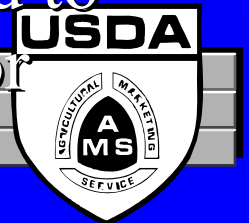


Marketing & Regulatory Programs

AMS Process

- Conduct public listening session regarding the use of natural claims in reference to livestock production, e.g. Naturally Raised.
 - December 11, 2006 – Washington, DC
 - January 17, 2007 – Denver, CO
 - January 18, 2007 – Seattle, WA
- Gather related input from representatives of interested parties.
- Develop and publish a proposed standard as related to livestock production natural claims with request for comment.

Marketing & Regulatory Programs



Future Activities

- <http://www.ams.usda.gov/lsg/stand/claim.htm>

